Martyr from 27.8.2001 to 11.2.2002. Cables have since been replaced W.L.L. phone facility is planned to be provided in the village after deployment of W.L.L. systems.

(e) and (0 By August, 2002.

Linking of Speed Post stations to National Level Centres

780. SHRIDINANATH M1SHRA: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) by when Government are going to link all 800 Speed Post stations to 120 National level centres for providing enhanced postal services;

(b) the details of the measures Government have devised to check default in the 'Speed Post Services' due to fault of the postal officials deliberately or otherwise; and

(c) whether there is any scheme in pipeline to provide similar service for rural areas?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI TAPAN SIK.DAR): (a) Each of the State Speed Post Centres are already linked to one of the National Speed Post Centres for processing of the Speed Post articles. All these State Speed Post Centres have already been authorised to book Speed Post articles for all National as well as International Speed Post Centres at par with the 120 National Speed Post Centres.

(b)The delivery efficiency of Speed Post Service is monitored in a sustained and regular manner to identify the number of articles delivered on time and the causes for delay, if any. If the delay is on account of negligence on the part of any departmental official, suitable punitive action is taken.

(c) No, Sir.

Backwardness in communication and IT

†781. SHRI JANESHWAR MISHRA: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the country is consistently lagging behind in the field of communications and information technology despite plenty of claims made by Government;

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†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

(b) whether it is also a fact that the Government are not going to hand over this sector to foreign companies and industrialists so that they eam profits;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) the number of indigenous/foreign companies which have participated in this sector, so far?

THE MINISTER OF STATE INTHE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRITAPAN SIKDAR): (a) No, Sir. In fact the growth rate for Information Technology Industry and Communication is approximately 27% and 22% annually during the last five years.

(b) and (c) Foreign equity participation is permitted by the Government to enhance the growth of the sector as well as to provide the latest technology. The details are as follows:

Telecom Manufacturing sector—up to 100%

Telecom service sector—up to 49% except Voice Mail Service, Audio tax/Unified Messaging Service where it is permitted—up to 100%.

IT sector—up to 100%

(d) The number of Indigenous/foreign companies which have participated in this sector are as follows:

IT	163
Basic Telecom Services	06
Value Added Services	46
Internet Services	509

Telephone complaints in Jorbagh Exchange

782. DR. SWAMI SAKSHI MAHARAJ: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) the telephone complaints registered/received in respect of various faults in Jorbagh Exchange area in Delhi in January, 2002;

(b) the time taken in attending and rectification of faults in each case;

(c) whether there was delay in any case;